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AUTHOR Curtis, Dan B.
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ABSTRACT

Noting the rapid increase in the training needs of industry, this paper argues that speech communication graduates with a strong background in organizational communication can meet those needs. Following a brief discussion of the need for university speech communication departments to develop communication training courses, the paper identifies and discusses eight issues in teaching such courses, then offers ways to resolve the issues. The issues discussed are as follows: (1) Are speech communication educators shifting their mission from research and education to training or trade? (2) Are trainers and training techniques "fads or frills" that will disappear during economically troubled times or in a more enlightened age? (3) Is there any real difference between training and teaching? (4) Can speech communication graduates really be prepared to adapt to a business environment? (5) Are speech communication educators qualified to teach courses in communication training and development? (6) Should faculty and students of communication training and development classes be involved in in-house and out-of-house consulting and development training while affiliated with their educational institution? (7) What should be the content of a communication training course? and (8) Where does such a course fit into the curriculum? Appendixes contain descriptions of 15 key training and development roles, a syllabus for a course in communication training, and a list of trainer competencies. (FL)

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Issues in Teaching Communication Training and Development Courses

by

Dan B. Curtis, Ph.D.
Professor of Speech Communication
Central Missouri State University
Warrensburg, MO 64093

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Career-minded students look toward organizational communication programs to supply the necessary blend of communication theory and practice for enhancing their marketability (McBath and Burhans, 1975). Thus, they should expect and rightly deserve that their course work will have direct application to their job. Madeline (1980) notes, "the ability to communicate clearly, effectively, persuasively--to gain understanding, and hopefully, allegiance--should be at the top of the list of skills developed by every careerist who wants to get anywhere near the top of most institutions in this country--government, business, education, what have you."

Speech communication programs generally were established to prepare students for the teaching profession. However, a dwindling enrollment at all educational levels often makes such a career choice appear unrealistic. Delia (1979) reinforces this belief with his observations about the "demise of the academic placement model," i.e., preparing students predominantly to teach. Concurrently, the demand for training and development activities in business, industry, and government agencies has accelerated greatly. Toffler (1983) suggests that business probably will spend more money on employee education than higher education now spends on students. He believes, "training is going to be one of the biggest Third Wave industries of all. It will even become a significant export industry." Toffler also notes that "we are about to go into the training and retraining business on a tremendous scale. All the hightech societies will have to pour resources into this activity, whether the task is done by the private sector, the education system, the military, the media, or all the above." If Toffler is correct and Delia's warnings accurate, communication departments must examine the practicality and relevance of their curricula. Such examination is even more urgent considering the projected enrollment declines in higher education. The continued cuts in legislative appropriations, low departmental budgets for

faculty, travel, operations and equipment combined with a citizenry demanding more accountability in educational quality, (value added education) and a society unwilling to supply a tax base for support of the expected quality—all speak to the urgency of alternative placement models for our products.

Studies by DiSalvo, Larsen and Seiler, 1975; Hanna, 1978; Muchmore & Galvin, 1983; Hildebrad, Miller & Swinyard, 1982; and the ASTD National Report, 1982 all identify the vital importance of communication skills, both oral and written, to employability. A rationale for developing communication training programs also has been articulated. Curtis, Beebe and Brooks (1986) note:

> The training needs of industry in recent years have accelerated at such rapid rates that communication departments have been either unwilling or unable to recognize the educational opportunities that changing realities afford. A number of communication skills considered vital by upper-level management have been identified. With slight variations in emphasis and direction within the curriculum, communication departments can make substantial contributions to an existing need of industry and, thereby, enhance professional opportunities for graduates.

Thus, with this rationale firmly in mind, the purpose of this paper is to (1) identify issues in teaching communication training and development courses, and (2) suggest ways to approach and/or resolve these issues.

Issues and Answers

While the following list is certainly not complete, these issues (Curtis, Beebe, and Brooks, 1986) that must be addressed by departments and/or faculty teaching communication training and development courses.

1. Are we shifting our mission from research and education to training or trade?

   Delia (1979) urges us to "maintain our disciplinary integrity while accommodating to the realities of altered enrollment and job placement patterns." We do not have to shift our mission from research and

education to training or trade. Research skills are as essential to trainers as they are to educators. A university curriculum in training should not be viewed narrowly. Students preparing for careers as trainers could take the traditional core communication courses such as public speaking, interpersonal, small group, theories of communication, persuasion and research methodologies. For an individual to be a competent trainer, he or she must know far more than the skills and techniques of training. Johnson (1984) describes training and development as "an eclectic activity demanding knowledge and skills in numerous areas including analytical reasoning, creativity and the performing arts, philosophy, adult psychology and learning, and of course speech communication."

In answer to those who find training too narrow and specialized, Johnson (1984) notes that training and development "represents one of the least specialized and most liberal of professional activities." This can be noted by looking at the incredible span of communication training courses taught at the university level. The scope of our course, for example, covers such diverse elements as sales, safety, orientation and motivation training. What makes the span of our cause so broad is the fact that what we are preparing our students for is not subject specific. We must equip our students to enter the hotel business as effectively as agricultural distribution, a national chain store such as Penny's or a state-operated mental health care facility. Much like Stephen Toulmin's (1956) concept of argumentation, some aspects of arguments are field dependent, i.e., what constitutes a good product for a fast-food chain will be quite different from that of a hospital. On the other hand, some aspects of arguments are field invariant, i.e., both businesses seek good

relations with their customers. What this means for training courses is that we must provide our students with heavy doses of "field invariant" training--education about conducting needs assessment for any organization, sound evaluation methods, appropriate teaching methods, etc.

Furthermore, the liberal aspect of training is documented by the diverse type of people and personalities trainers encounter in each program. Since organizations do not hire people with just one type of collegiate training or cultural background, liberally/broadly educated trainers can relate to and work with individuals with widely diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise. Clearly, a university curriculum that prepares students for careers in training must be broad-based, providing students of training with the ability to transfer that knowledge to others in a variety of settings.

2. Are trainers and training techniques "fads or frills" that will disappear during economically troubled times or in a more enlightened age?

Trainers and training techniques are here to stay. Trainers represent a reasonably stable profession recognized for their contribution to organizational effectiveness (Odiorne, 1975). At our university-sponsored Career Fair Day, numerous organizations were able to relate information about their own in-house training and development programs. The organizations included companies as diverse as the locally owned Stahl Industries which makes aluminum die parts to the multinational giant--IBM.

In a recent issue of Business Week--"Guide to Careers"--Ross (1984) lists the top twelve entry-level jobs in business in terms of ultimate salary and anticipated growth in number of openings expected during the next decade. These entry positions include accountant, auditor, banking trainee, broker trainee, computer analyst, assistant plant manager, manufacturing representative, retail buyer, international marketer, job

analyst, purchasing assistant, and trainer.

Toffler (1983), as cited earlier, substantiates the future need for trainers and training. Goldstein and Carnevale (1983) note "more job training takes place in the 'shadow educational system' provided by employers than in schools and colleges. A recent study ("Change In America," 1986) regarding shifts in work and the work force suggests that "between two and three percent of the nation's labor force--which is projected to reach 135 million by the year 2000--may need to be retrained each year." These observations do not suggest that training departments like all departmental units within an industrial agency will not be under review and constantly challenged to justify their existence. In fact, it is during economically tight times that productivity and efficiency become paramount issues in most organizations since survival is at stake. Also, employees' ability to deal with disgruntled customers or coworkers in a delicate and successful manner becomes increasingly important in a highly competitive environment. Therefore, adaptability and change, two of the more salient issues to survival, become increasingly important. Both of these are the stimulus for and the result of the development of the available human resources.

In addition, scrutiny is desirable. One reason that training has often been what Johnson (1986) calls "the soft underbelly" is that educators have failed to teach students accountability in hard terms of dollars saved or gained. It is exactly for this reason that training courses are not frills or fads. They are vital to the economic future of America, if we require a great emphasis on evaluation. Indeed, such scrutiny is desirable and, on balance, healthy. McLagan and McCullough's study (cited in Pace, Peterson, and Porter, 1984) provides a description

of the roles of a training and development specialist. (See Appendix A.)

3. Is there any real difference between training and teaching? (Between andragogy and pedagogy?) If so, what are the unique problems of and approaches necessary for each of these two learning environments? Can anyone steeped in the discipline of speech communication do both?

Significant differences exist between training and teaching. While this does not suggest that either a teacher or a trainer cannot do both--the uniqueness and challenge of each function is significant. Perhaps the most obvious difference is in the students themselves. As Knowles (1975, 1984a, 1984b) has stressed on several occasions, adult learners are self-directed and see themselves as responsible for their own lives, resenting and resisting being treated as irresponsible children. Also, they bring a greater depth and breadth of experience to the training session and must be motivated by a sense of a need to know this new information. Knowles notes that adults are life-centered and problem-centered. Therefore, they do not learn readily just for the sake of learning but are driven by internal motivations such as self-esteem, recognition, a better quality of life, self-realization, etc.

Moreover, enmity between trainers and teachers cannot be ignored. Trainers often view teachers as too theoretical while teachers view trainers as too narrow or specialized. Some tension between the two is not necessarily harmful. Instead, it may be healthy for each to push and tug at the other so that trainers do not become shallow, gimmick pushers and professors don't live among the clouds. It is at this very tension point that some of the best education can occur. When teachers are familiar with the actual applicability of their teaching they can support their lectures with specific examples and illustrations to enable students to see the needed insights. Also, a rigorous applied research focus in

the curriculum will prevent industry from having trainers who do not have healthy theoretical moorings which will, in fact, make them easily dispensable in those cases where they cannot document changes/outcomes which occurred or failed to occur as a result of the training. It is for this precise reason that we must equip students properly to conduct sophisticated needs assessments, to provide the appropriate training, and to be able to measure the impact upon the trainees to assure quality control.

While teaching and training are similar, ample evidence suggests that each activity requires distinct approaches to facilitate a healthy crossover. A thorough understanding of the learning principles which are unique to each group is necessary. Ricks (1980), Cushing (1980), and Rudolph and Johnson (1983), among others, have noted major problems with persons moving from teaching to training which further accentuates the need to adapt to the distinctive features of the teaching and training audiences. Regardless of the perceived mobility problems, machinery appears to be in place for the adult learner from the "traditional evening programs offered by two and four-year colleges and universities, to special courses, programs, and entire degree-granting institutions set up by business and industry to train their employees in the needed technical and managerial skills" ("Change In America," 1986).

4. Can speech communication graduates really be prepared to adapt to a business environment? Even if they can, how can we overcome the stereotypic impressions of industry toward our products?

Speech communication graduates have and will continue to make successful employees in the business world. Lahiff and Hatfield (1978), Donaldson and Scannell (1979), and Kelly (1986) all suggest that the need

for communication skills is a top training priority. Kelly (1986) also found that only a small percentage of trainers surveyed had academic preparation in communication. Many segments of corporate America apparently are not familiar with the expertise of communication students. Those students making the transition are probably those with the personality to make a good impression and/or at least have a minor in some business area, i.e., marketing, management or business administration. Perhaps one of the major reasons for the ignorance of corporate America concerning our students is that we have not taught them to market themselves well. To stress to an interviewer that "I can give good talks," or "I am people oriented," are inadequate indicators of the training our students are receiving. When communication students go to interviews for training-related jobs, they must be prepared to stress their abilities and experiences related to needs assessment, designing training packages and stringent evaluations that demonstrate a measurable difference in either productivity or efficiency. Evaluations that go well beyond the "smiley faces" that say "we liked what you did, it was fun," will get the attention of corporate America. Until we demand that our students go beyond being nice to being sensitive to cost effectiveness issues, we are inadequately preparing them for corporate tasks.

Freeley (1986) addresses the importance of a broad communication background when he cites several national studies that justify the stress on critical thinking that is provided by courses like argumentation and debate. For years people have acknowledged the value of arguing both sides of an issue as required by educational debates. Within the competitive environment of corporate America, there is also a great need for critical thinkers who can be strong advocates.

Finally, providing quality out-of-class projects will give our

students something specific to discuss with interviewers that demonstrates experiences that would benefit the inquiring organization. We have many success stories of students who have made an effective transition to the industrial environment with a communication degree. While stereotypes of communication majors as voice and diction people, public speakers, and elocutionists may abound, there are also employers that are requesting communication majors by virtue of the success of previous speech communication majors.[2] We have received calls from personnel managers representing IBM, Xerox, Marion Laboratories and Farmland Industries suggesting a strong interest in speech communication majors because of the skills these majors bring to the work environment.

5. Are we qualified to teach courses in communication training and development when we did not have courses in our own graduate education?

Faculty expertise that has been focused on methods of teaching secondary school students needs now to be more focused on methods of teaching the adult learners. Moreover, the evidence suggests that the kinds of communication skills sought in industry are precisely those acquired in undergraduate and graduate communication programs--listening, persuading, small group leadership, presentational speaking, conflict resolution, etc. Activities like needs analysis, evaluation of training, and compliance gaining strategies are all grounded in rhetorical theory and research-gathering techniques--but under a different name. Industrial trainers certainly do not have the breadth and depth to handle every training assignment that comes their way. Trainers, like teachers, must engage in the kinds of research necessary to prepare for each new training assignment. This is precisely why we emphasize research methods in a training course. Our students must be exposed to enough breadth to see

that a training career may span government, industry, business and education. Therefore, we need to demand that our students be sensitive to the specific "corporate culture." Yet, we can and must provide them with: (1) a conceptual framework within which they can approach any corporate training need; (2) a sensitivity to the specific skills or knowledge required by each group be it fire fighters or the gas company; (3) the fundamental principles that cross all areas, i.e., things like how to decide which teaching method is best for this group regarding this subject.

6. Should faculty and students of communication training and development classes be involved in in-house and out-of-house consulting and training while affiliated with their educational institution?

Faculty and students of communication and training development classes should involve themselves with in-house and out-of-house training while affiliated with their educational institution. A parallel for this activity is the now popular and invaluable internship program. Internships, an educational activity based on student teaching as a prototype, have proven invaluable as a source of practical experience. Students from our communication training course have derived invaluable experience from both their internship in human resource development and the in- and out-of-house training experiences that grew out of classroom assignments.

Faculty and students can be enriched by sharing their expertise with diverse audiences and organizations. The values of training experiences include visibility, new or improved teaching skills, recruitment opportunities, and collegiality (Curtis and Winsor, 1986).

The visibility benefits assume the trainers will do a good job. Our faculty have developed a departmental brochure and informally organized themselves into a departmental consulting and training service.

When possible, students are incorporated into training so their experiences can be expanded. We find the quality reputations of seasoned trainers serve to position the department as a ready resource for agencies needing services. This enhances the image of the university as well as the department.

Training opportunities that genuinely meet the need of diverse groups, will, of necessity, encourage faculty to read, engage in research, plan, and utilize instructional competencies that here-to-fore had not always been demonstrated on an applied level. Adult trainees provide faculty and students with priceless opportunities to put their theories into practice. Using real-life training experiences in the classroom enriches lectures by adding color and relevance to the instruction. Additionally, handout materials developed for specific training programs often are very helpful in the university classroom. Clearly, new or improved teaching skills can be a by-product of training.

A third value of out-of-house training can be in the area of recruitment for the department and/or university. When the training atmosphere is challenging, well-paced, stimulating and practical, the trainees are reminded that learning can be enriching to their self-concept as well as their promotability and overall job performance.

An additional value often generated from faculty and students engaged in training is that of collegiality. Training teams that cut across departmental lines can be drawn together. Our communication faculty have had the opportunity of working with colleagues from criminal justice departments, with members of the School of Public Service and with the Continuing Education staff. The professional contacts have engendered friendships and interdisciplinary publications. The

integration of our own communication students as members of our training team has also built cohesion within the department between students and faculty.

We should be reminded, however, that in- and out-of-house training can also lead to disappointments. Jealousy and ill-will toward those engaged in training may develop. It is possible for cliques to emerge and for those engaged in training to be perceived as competing with the university. Faculty teaching may suffer rather than be enhanced by short-changing classroom preparation in order to conduct another training session. Redding (1983) noted some views commonly held among faculty while debating the negative side of the proposition "Resolved: That paid consulting is contrary to the best interests of academia." Though arguing that consulting is in the best interests of academia, he identified a list of sins alleged by critics that included: "incompetence, serving as a stooge for the establishment, arrogance toward colleagues, arrogance toward clients, neglect of classroom duties, contempt for students, avoidance of research, etc." As with consulting, the same dangers must be avoided by trainers from academia.

7. What should be the content of a communication training course?

The content of communication training courses should include units in establishing training objectives, conducting needs assessments, training adults, designing, coordinating, and evaluating programs, using audio-visual aids and applying educational technology. In our training course we have the following objectives:

(a) To provide an introduction to the procedures and practices of training and human resource development.

(b) To acquaint the student with ways of designing a training program for an organization.

(c) To acquaint the student with effective modes of presenting training programs.

(d) To acquaint the student with methods of evaluating training programs.

(e) To acquaint the student with a variety of resources important to development of human resources.

(f) To apply the course content to a specific communication training situation.

To achieve these goals the students plan and conduct an out-of-class training event, plan and conduct an in-class training event, facilitate an in-class activity suitable for a variety of training situations, observe an actual training session conducted by some professional, and interview a full-time professional trainer.

Even though a one semester class does not allow the ideal time necessary for a trainer to evaluate whether the training had the desired effect, out-of-class projects provide the students with crucial field experience. This past year we had one group work with the local Penney's Department Store. They conducted a needs assessment and discovered that cashiers needed training in how to deal with disgruntled customers when they were returning merchandise. After several consultations with the manager, they provided a planned training program which was approved and implemented. The students used a standardized means of evaluating the interaction of the cashiers prior to the training. Afterwards, by using confederates unknown to the cashiers, the students were able to demonstrate that their training was indeed effective and, therefore, beneficial to Penney's since the "customers" now rated the cashiers as more helpful and less offensive. Traditional communication programs,

unfortunately, do not provide instruction or assignments that encompass many of these areas of study or experiential opportunities.

8. Where does such a course fit? Is this a graduate or undergraduate course? Is it an elective or required course? Should there be prerequisites to the course?

A communication training course should be an upper division undergraduate course (see sample syllabus in Appendix B). To maximize learning, the course could be offered at the senior level so that it can be taken by students with a wealth of background in communication, i.e., public speaking, interpersonal and small group. As an upperdivision course, the question of prerequisites is often not an issue for departmental majors. However, in those cases where majors from other disciplines are recruited, it may be necessary to establish prerequisites from the above mentioned courses plus audience adaptation, speech writing and criticism, argumentation and debate, presentational speaking, etc., to provide the necessary foundation for a quality upper level course. Ideally, a separate graduate course could be offered.

Since a training course must focus on needs assessment and methods of training and evaluation, students must already have had some of the training provided by the suggested prerequisites. This should free the class for a more advanced and deeper analysis of the crucial issues regarding the development of human resources. For a detailed list of competencies detailed by McLagan and McCullough (cited in Pace, Peterson, and Porter, 1984) expected of a training and development specialist see Appendix C (identified by the American Society for Training and Development).

Communication training should be required of all students planning a career in human resource development. It should be noted, however, that

an undergraduate degree in organizational communication, which includes course work in communication training, should not be viewed as a "ticket" to a position as a trainer in an industrial setting any more than a bachelors degree is all that is needed for teaching in the college setting.

Conclusion

The career-minded college student of the next two decades will demand courses relevant to the needs of industry. A major business need is for trainers with communication skills. Speech communication graduates with a strong background in organizational communication, who include a course in communication training, can meet some of the training needs of industry. Thus, the visionary communication faculty will develop a curriculum that will prepare students for careers in human resource development. Responsiveness to these pressure points well may be the key to the growth of our discipline in the twenty-first century. The ultimate benefactors are those who should be--our students.

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Appendix A

THE FIFTEEN KEY TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ROLES

-EVALUATOR . . . The role of identifying the extent of a program, service or product's impact.

-GROUP FACILITATOR . . . The role of managing group discussions and group process so that individuals learn and group members feel the experience is positive.

-INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT COUNSELOR . . . The role of helping an individual assess personal competencies, values, goals and identify and plan development and career actions.

-INSTRUCTIONAL WRITER . . . The role of preparing written learning and instructional materials.

-INSTRUCTOR . . . The role of presenting information and directing structured learning experiences so that individuals learn.

-MANAGER OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT . . . The role of planning, organizing, staffing, controlling training and development operations or training and development projects and of linking training and development operations with other organization units.

-MARKETER . . . The role of selling Training and Development viewpoints, learning packages, programs and services to target audiences outside one's own work unit.

-MEDIA SPECIALIST . . . The role of producing software for and using audio, visual, computer and other hardware-based technologies for training and development.

-NEEDS ANALYST . . . The role of defining gaps between ideal and actual performance and specifying the cause of the gaps.

-PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR . . . The role of ensuring that the facilities, equipment, materials, participants and other components of a learning event are present and that program logistics run smoothly.

-PROGRAM DESIGNER . . . The role of preparing objectives, defining content, selecting and sequencing activities for a specific program.

-STRATEGIST . . . The role of developing long-range plans for what the training and development structure, organization, direction, policies, programs, services, and practices will be in order to accomplish the training and development mission.

-TASK ANALYST . . . Identifying activities, tasks, sub-tasks, human resource and support requirements necessary to accomplish specific results in a job or organization.

-THEORETICIAN . . . The role of developing and testing theories of learning, training and development.

-TRANSFER AGENT . . . The role of helping individuals apply learning after the learning experience.

Appendix B

SpCm 4200, Communication Training
Course Syllabus, Spring, 1986

TEXTS: Human Resource Development by Donaldson and Scannell (Graduate and Undergraduates)

Training: Program Development and Evaluation by Goldstein (Graduates only)

GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course is designed for speech communication majors who expect to apply their communication skills in a business, industrial or governmental setting and for noncommunication majors who expect training to be a primary responsibility in their future job. This course will introduce the student to the field of training.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course intends to:

1. provide an introduction to the procedures and practices of training
2. acquaint students with ways of designing a training program for an organization
3. acquaint students with effective modes of presenting training programs
4. acquaint students with methods of evaluating training programs
5. acquaint students with a variety of resources important to training
6. apply course content specifically to communication training situations

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. At the end of this course, each student will be able to answer in writing each of the following questions.

   What is training? What is consulting?
   What does a trainer do?
   How is training different from teaching?
   How does one assess training needs?
   How is a training program designed?
   What are the components of a training proposal?
   How are training objectives written and used?
   What are some typical areas of employee training?
   What are the typical areas of training in business and industry?
   What are the problems of training adults?
   How is a proper training climate created?
   How can participants be motivated in training?
   What are the steps in planning for meetings?
   How can training programs be marketed?
   What are key traits for effective trainers?
   What are the major terms used in H.R.D. and O and D?

2. After completing this course each student should be able to:

   a. plan and design a training proposal,
   b. conduct a training session,
   c. select, present and debrief an effective training activity.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

This course is based upon the training principle of learning by involved "doing." Thus a modified contract approach will allow students to select and complete the requirements for a desired grade by "doing" the projects required for that grade. Completion of projects in NOT based solely on quantity of the final product.

COURSE PROJECTS

The following projects are suggested for completion by students:

1. plan and conduct an actual out-of-class training event with adults (up to 100 points)
2. plan and conduct a simulated in-class training event (up to 75 points)
3. present a researched oral report to the class on a topic assigned by the instructor (up to 30 points)
4. facilitate an in-class activity suitable for a variety of training situations (up to 30 points)
5. submit a written review of an approved training related book and orally summarize in class (up to 60 points)
6. submit a written review of five journal articles on training and orally summarize in class (up to 60 points)
7. observe an actual training session, submit a written report, summarize orally in class (up to 40 points)
8. interview a full-time professional trainer, submit a written report and summarize in class (up to 40 points)
9. attend a scheduled field trip to a training center (up to 15 points)
10. there will also be two 100-point exams given in course.

COURSE GRADE

Final grades will be assigned on the following basis:

Undergraduate: A = Must contract for at least 480 points worth of projects
Must average 90% success on all projects completed
Must complete either project 1 or 2

B = Must contract for at least 425 points worth of projects
Must average 80% success on all projects completed
Must complete either project 1 or 2

C = Must contract for at least 375 points worth of projects
Must average 70% success on all projects completed

Graduate: Must contract for undergraduate requirements for an A
Must submit a training proposal representing a quality effort.

WRITTEN WORK

All written work submitted for this course must be typed and conform to approved style manuals.

TOPICS FOR MAJOR REPORTS

Communication Training
Sales Training
Supervisory and Management Training
Assessing Training Needs
Safety Training
Health Care Training
Andragogy--Teaching Adult Learners (2)
Evaluating Training
Using Audio Visuals in Training
Orientation Training
Motivating Trainees
Planning Training Content
Using Activities, Games and Simulations in Training
Preparing Training Objectives
Technical/Skill Training
Presenting/Directing Training Sessions
Training Environment

Appendix C

ASTD Competency Study

There are thirty-one (31) competencies in this model:

1. ADULT LEARNING UNDERSTANDING . . . Knowing how adults acquire and use knowledge, skills, attitudes. Understanding individual differences in learning.

2. A/V SKILL . . . Selecting and using audio/visual hardware and software.

3. CAREER DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE . . . Understanding the personal and organizational issues and practices relevant to individual careers.

4. COMPETENCY IDENTIFICATION SKILL . . . Identifying the knowledge and skill requirements of jobs, tasks, roles.

5. COMPUTER COMPETENCE . . . Understanding and being able to use computers.

6. COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS SKILL . . . Assessing alternatives in terms of their financial, psychological, and strategic advantages and disadvantages.

7. COUNSELING SKILL . . . Helping individuals recognize and understand personal needs, values, problems, alternatives and goals.

8. DATA REDUCTION SKILL . . . Scanning, synthesizing, and drawing conclusions from data.

9. DELEGATION SKILL . . . Assigning task responsibility and authority to others.

10. FACILITIES SKILL . . . Planning and coordinating logistics in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

11. FEEDBACK SKILL . . . Communicating opinions, observations and conclusions such that they are understood.

12. FUTURING SKILL . . . Projecting trends and visualizing possible and probable futures and their implications.

13. GROUP PROCESS SKILL . . . Influencing groups to both accomplish tasks and fulfill the needs of their members.

14. INDUSTRY UNDERSTANDING . . . Knowing the key concepts and variables that define an industry or sector (e.g., critical issues, economic vulnerabilities, measurements, distribution channels, inputs, outputs, information sources).

15. INTELLECTUAL VERSATILITY . . . Recognizing, exploring and using a broad range of ideas and practices. Thinking logically and creatively without undue influence from personal biases.

16. LIBRARY SKILLS . . . Gathering information from printed and other records sources. Identifying and using information specialists and

reference services and aids.

17. MODEL BUILDING SKILL . . . Developing theoretical and practical frameworks which describe complex ideas in understandable, usable ways.

18. NEGOTIATION SKILL . . . Securing win-win agreements while successfully representing a special interest in a decision situation.

19. OBJECTIVES PREPARATION SKILL . . . Preparing clear statements which describe desired outputs.

20. ORGANIZATION BEHAVIOR UNDERSTANDING . . . Seeing organizations as dynamic, political, economic, and social systems which have multiple goals; using this larger perspective as a framework for understanding and influencing events and change.

21. ORGANIZATION UNDERSTANDING . . . Knowing the strategy, structure, power networks, financial position, systems of a specific organization.

22. PERFORMANCE OBSERVATION SKILLS . . . Tracking and describing behaviors and their effects.

23. PERSONNEL/HR FIELD UNDERSTANDING . . . Understanding issues and practices in other HR areas (Organization Development, Organization Job Design, Human Resource Planning, Selection and Staffing, Personnel Research and Information Systems, Compensation and Benefits, Employee Assistance, Union/Labor Relations).

24. PRESENTATION SKILLS . . . Verbally presenting information such that the intended purpose is achieved.

25. QUESTIONING SKILL . . . Gathering information from and stimulating insight in individuals and groups through the use of interviews, questionnaires and other probing methods.

26. RECORDS MANAGEMENT SKILL . . . Storing data in easily retrievable form.

27. RELATIONSHIP VERSATILITY . . . Adjusting behavior in order to establish relationships across a broad range of people and groups.

28. RESEARCH SKILLS . . . Selecting, developing and using methodologies, statistical and data collection techniques for a formal inquiry.

29. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FIELD UNDERSTANDING . . . Knowing the technological, social, economic, professional, and regulatory issues in the field; understanding the role T&D plays in helping individuals learn for current and future jobs.

30. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES UNDERSTANDING . . . Knowing the techniques and methods used in training; understanding their appropriate uses.

31. WRITING SKILLS . . . Preparing written material which follows generally accepted rules of style and form, is appropriate for the audience, creative, and accomplishes its intended purposes.